

The Divine Institution of Magistracy, and the gracious Design of its Institution.

A

SERMON

Preach'd before the

QUEEN,

At St. JAMES's,

On Tuesday, March 8. 1708.

BEING THE

ANNIVERSARY

Of Her MAJESTY's Happy Accession to the Throne.

ROM. XIII. 4.

He is the Minister of GOD, to thee for Good.

By OFSPRING ^{Blackall} Lord Bishop of EXON.

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Rom. xiii. 4.

He is the Minister of G O D, to thee for Good.

TH E main Design of the *Apostle* in the first half of this Chapter is to teach the Duty of Subjects, and to press the Practice thereof. Their Duty in general he declares to be *Subjection*; that is, both Submission to the Authority of their Governours, and Obedience to their Laws; *Ver. 1. Let every Soul be subject unto the Higher Powers.*

And the Reasons or Motives whereby in that, and in the following Verses, he enforces this Duty are chiefly Two; (both which are also intimated in the Text) *Viz.* 1. The Divine Institution of Magistracy; *He is the Minister of God*; and, 2. The gracious Design of its Institution; *for Good; He is the Minister of God, to thee for Good.* Both which Points I shall therefore now in Order speak to; and the Consideration of them both may serve as well to suggest to the Magistrate his Duty, as to bind Subjects to theirs; and likewise for several other good Purposes, some of which I shall note as I go along.

I. One thing here declar'd, is the Divine Institution of Magistracy; *He is the Minister of God*; which Words do import Two Things; 1. That it is of God, or by Divine Appointment, that some do bear Rule over others; And, 2. That the Authority exercis'd by the Magistrate is a Ray or Portion of the Divine Authority, communicated to him, and entrusted with him by God.

I. That it is of God, or by Divine Appointment, that some do bear Rule over others.

I do not say that the particular Form of Government is, in every Nation, specially prescribed by God. I see no Reason to affirm that it was always so even in *Judea* it self; and much less that it has been ordinarily so, in any other Nation.

Neither do I say that the Person bearing the Office of Magistracy is always of Divine Designation and Appointment; or that he is nominated to his Office by God; and that no Person, not so design'd or nominated, may lawfully bear it. For the Titles and Claims to Government have been various; Of several of the *Jewish* Judges and Kings the Title was indeed such a special Divine Appointment; But of the first Kings that ever were in the World, the Title was, most probably, only their Paternal Right to rule and govern their own Children and Descendants. And in other Countries, and in latter Times, of some the Title has been Election, and of others Hereditary Succession: And of all the Kings now reigning in the World, and claiming to do so by Hereditary Succession, there is not perhaps any One whose Title was not originally founded in Election or Conquest. 'Tis most reasonable therefore now that in every Place that should be taken to be the most *rightful Government* which is establish'd;

the



the Powers that be are ordained of God, and that the best Title to Government which has prevail'd by Prescription, or is settled by the Constitution : And whoever in any Place, should now set up himself upon any other Title, would be but a Disturber of the Peace of the World ; would be the Author of much Confusion, and might justly be treated as an Enemy to his Country.

I do not, I say therefore, affirm either that the Form of Government in every Place, is, or ought to be, of Divine Prescription ; or that the Person exercising the same is always of Divine Designation, any otherwise than as all Changes and Revolutions in Government are brought about by the Working or Permission or the Divine Providence : In which Sense the Psalmist says, that *God is the Judge, he putteth down One, and setteth up another* ; *Psi. 75. 7.* and the Prophet *Daniel*, that *the most High ruleth in the Kingdom of Men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will* ; and that *he removeth Kings and setteth up Kings : Dan. 4. 17. 2. 22.* and the Prophet *Jeremy*, that *God had given (among other Lands) the Land of Judea into the Hand of Nebuchadnezzar the King of Babylon his Servant, Jer. 26. 6.* because in his Providence he had permitted him, tho' without any just Title thereto, to make a Conquest thereof.

But whatever the Form of Government be, that, whether by Divine Appointment, or by Consent or Constitution, is receiv'd and established in any Country ; and whether the Person who has the Administration of the same be (in any other Sense than only Providentially) of Divine Designation, or not ; what I say, and affirm, is, that the Government it self, which he exercises and administers, is of Divine Institution ; that is, that it is the Will of God that some should bear Rule, and that others should be in Subjection ; and that they which bear Rule should enact Laws for the Preservation of Justice and Peace among their Subjects, and duly execute the Laws made for that Purpose : In which Two Things, the whole Power and Exercise of Sovereignty do consist.

And that Magistracy it self is thus of Divine Institution, is the least, I think, that can be understood to be meant in those Words of *Solomon*, *Prov. 8. 15. By me Kings reign, and Princes decree Justice* ; Or by those of the *Apostle* at the first Verse of this Chapter ; *There is no Power but of God ; the Powers that be are ordained of God.* Or by *St. Peter*, *1 Epist. 2. 13. Submit your selves to every Ordinance of Man, for the Lord's sake, whether it be to the King, as supreme, or unto Governours, as unto them that are sent by him, for the Punishment of Evil Doers, and for the Praise of them that do well.* But,

II. When the Magistrate is called here *the Minister of God* ; the Meaning, I suppose, is, more than this, *viz.* not only that the Office it self is by Divine Appointment or Institution ; but also, that the Authority by which the Magistrate acts, and the Power which he exercises in the Execution of his Office, is a Ray or Portion of the Divine Authority and Power, deriv'd to him from, and communicated to him by, God.

For the *Apostle* here says, He is a *Minister*, that is, a Servant ; and if

Servant to another, then, plainly, not his own Master ; and if not Master of himself, much less can he be, in his own Right, Master of another. The Authority therefore by which he acts, the Power which he exercises in the Government of his Subjects are not, properly, his own, are not natural or essential to his Person, are not inherently in himself ; but must be deriv'd to him from that Superior Being who has Authority over both him and his Subjects ; who can Commission him to bear Rule over them, and can lay it as a Duty upon them to be Subject to him.

And so it follows in the Text ; He is *the Minister* (or the Servant) of God. And it must needs be so ; It he be any Body's Servant, it must be God's ; For 'twould be absurd to say, that he is *their Servant* over whom he bears Rule ; because that would be in Effect to say, that it is all one to command, and to obey ; to have Power over, and to be subject to.

I do not indeed deny but that, according to the Constitution of some Countries, the Magistrate, even the Highest Magistrate of all, may be chosen to his Office by the People. 'Tis plainly so in all Elective Kingdoms, where the Supreme humane Power is plac'd in One nominated had no more Right to it than any other Man, and who (according to the Constitution of the Country) could not lawfully have been put into the Possession of it any other way : But nevertheless I say, that even in this Case, tho' the People name the Person, they don't give him his Authority ; They chuse the Officer, but when that's done, he is God's Officer not theirs ; *He is the Minister of God.* not the Servant of the People ; He has his Commission and Authority from God, tho' he had his Nomination from them. And if it be the Sovereign Power of all which according to the Constitution, he is, by Vertue of such Election, chosen to, being possess'd of that, he has no Superior but God ; he has none above him upon Earth, to question, censure or punish him ; and *whosoever resisteth the Power, resisteth the Ordinance of God.*

And in this there is no Incongruity or Absurdity at all ; It should not therefore, methinks, be so strange to any, as some seem to think it ; that the Sovereign Power upon Earth should be subject only to God, and not be accountable to the People ; not even altho' he became at first possess'd of such Power only by their Suffrage, or by their voluntary Acceptance of him ; and much less if he came to it by any other Title : Especially, there being Instances of the like Nature continually before our Eyes ; I mean, wherein the Officer has his Nomination from One, and receives his Authority from another ; and his accountable for the Exercise of his Power, not to those that chose him, but to some Power Superior both to him and them, from whom, after he was chosen, he had his Authority to act.

For thus it is with us, in all Corporations that have Charters, and, it may be, in some others ; they are empower'd by their Charters, or claim by Prescription to chuse their own Major, or other chief Magistrate ; but when he is chosen, 'tis from the Q U E E N, that he has his Authority ;

thority ; and after he is plac'd in his Office, he is not their *Servant* that chose him, but their *Governour*. And in Case he should mis-behave himself in his Office ; he is not accountable to those that chose him to it, but to the *Q U E E N*, by whose Commission he acted in it. They indeed may complain of him, or bear witness against him ; but it belongs to that Superior Power (Superior both to him and them) from whom he had his Authority, to judge, whether he did mis-behave himself or not ; and, if he did, to inflict on him a proper Punishment.

Nay this was in Truth the very Case of the *Roman Emperors*, in the Apostolical Times ; They were chosen Emperors by the Army, or the Senate ; but the Dignity they were chosen to was *Imperial* ; their Power, consequently, was Sovereign. And therefore, To them, as invested with such Authority, the *Apostle*, here in this Chapter, declares it to be the Duty of every other Person, (not excepting the Electors themselves) to be subject ; (*Ver. 1.*) *Let every Soul be Subject to the Higher Powers.* Of them, in Possession of the Imperial Dignity, he speaks, when he says, (*Ver. 2.*) *There is no Power but of God ; the Powers that be are ordained of God.* Against them, being invested with Sovereign Authority, he declares it to be unlawful for the Subjects to make Resistance, and denounces *Damnation* to such as dare to do it. With Regard to them, (for it must have been with a special Regard to the Emperor then reigning, whether it was *Claudius* or *Nero*, both of them very bad ones.) He says, *Whosoever resisteth the Power, resisteth the Ordinance of God ;* And, lastly, 'twas of one of them, that he says here in the Text, *He is the Minister of God ;* that is, he acts by a Divine Commission ; and the Power which he regularly exercises is delegated to him by God.

And it must needs be so, The supreme Magistrate must have his Power from God ; because he can have it no other Way ; For that it is not originally and essentially in himself, has been already shewn ; and that he can't have it from the People is evident, because it is such a Power as the People never had, nor could have ; and what they have not themselves, they can't give to another.

For Instance : The Supreme Magistrate has (by the Consent of all) the Power of Life and Death ; He *bears the Sword*, the *Apostle* here says (*Ver. 4.*) and he bears it, he farther says, *not in vain* ; He may therefore warrantably make use of it, as there is Occasion, to cut off Evil Doers : But now I say this Power can't be given to him by the People, because 'tis what they themselves have not. For no Man, as a private Man, has Power over his Brother's Life ; but he would be a Murderer, should he, of his own Head, kill even a Malefactor : Nay, no Man has Power over his own Life, not even in those Cases wherein the Magistrate (by the Allowance of all) has Power over it : For a private Man would be *Felo de se*, should he, tho immediately after he had Murder'd another, and for that very Reason too, kill himself ; And yet when this Crime, his having Murder'd another, is confess'd in Court, or fully prov'd against him before the Magistrate, it may with much better Reason be

doubted whether the Magistrate can lawfully pardon him, (God himself having said, *whoſo ſheddeth Man's Blood, by Man ſhall his Blood be ſhed*) Gen. 9. 6. than whether he may lawfully condemn him to ſuffer the Death he has deſerved.

And as this Authority could not be granted to Magiſtrates, by ſingle Men (no man ſingly having Power over his own or another's Life,) ſo neither could it be granted by the Community : For how ſhould they, in a Body, or as in Company, come to have a greater Power, than was among them all while they were ſingle ?

Betides ; This Poſition, that *the Sovereign Power of the Supreme Magiſtrate is derived to him from the Aggregate Body of the People, as by their Grant or Conceſſion* ; as it is directly contrary to what the *Apoſtle* here affirms, *Viz That there is no Power but of God* ; ſo it is plainly ground'd upon a Suppoſition that is falſe in Faſt ; *Viz.* that there were a great Number of Men living together upon the Earth before the firſt Inſtitution of Civil Government ; which whole Multitude had then by Natural Right, the ſame Power over ſingle Men, which is now exerciſ'd by the Magiſtrate.

This indeed might poſſibly have been true, in Caſe this Multitude had ſprung together out of the Earth ; of if they had been all Created by God at one and the ſame Time : But it can't be true upon Suppoſition that they all deſcended from the ſame firſt Parents, *Adam and Eve* ; for it being ſo, no Man, except only the firſt Man of all, ever came into the World, but he was naturally, at the very inſtant of his Birth, in a State of Subjection to ſome other Men : No Man, ſince the firſt, was ever, properly ſpeaking, Free-born. For in his Natural Capacity, he was born a Subject to his own Parents, and in his Political Capacity to the King, or other Chief Governour of that Kingdom or State of which, at his Birth, he became a Member. The People could not therefore give to any Man that Authority over either themſelves or others which they themſelves never had ; They could not give to another what was not their own to give ; they could not give to one Man what another Man was then in the Lawful Poſſeſſion of. Thus, I hope, it appears, that Government is of Divine Inſtitution, and that the Authority of thoſe that are plac'd in Government is from God ; Both which I ſuppoſe, were meant by the *Apoſtle*, in theſe Words. *He is the Miniſter of God.*

And from this Truth, theſe following Things may fairly be inferr'd.

1. That it ought to be a main Part of the Magiſtrate's Care (indeed his chiefeſt Care of all) to promote the Honour of God, whoſe *Miniſter he is.*

Should I go about to declare, How, or, by what Means he may beſt do this, I might be thought perhaps to touch too nearly upon Politicks ; and therefore I wholly forbear that. But I hope it may paſs for good Divinity, and nothing more, to ſay in general, that the Magiſtrate, even the Sovereign Power of all, being a Subject of God, being (as the *Apoſtle* here ſays) *the Miniſter, or the Servant, of God*, being put in Truſt by God, and acting in whatever he does, as a Magiſtrate, in God's Name,

Name, and by his Commission, ought, in the whole Administration of his High Office, to have an Eye to God's Glory, and consequently to provide, the best he can, by wholesome Laws, and a due and prudent Execution of them, for the perpetual Establishment of the true Religion, and for the well Instructing of all his Subjects therein; for the Encouragement of Piety and Vertue, and for the effectual Suppression of all Prophaneness, Vice and Immorality. For of the King, *as Supreme*, as well as of subordinate *Governours* and Magistrates, the *Apostle* says, that they are sent by God, *for the Punishment of Evil Doers, and for the Praise of them that do well.* 1 Pet. 2. 14.

2. If the Magistrate be *the Minister*, or the *Servant of God*, then He as well as his People, is subject to another Power, even to the Great God of Heaven and Earth, *by whom Kings reign*, and who is *King of Kings, and Lord of Lords.* Prov. 8. 15. 1 Tim. 6. 15. Then He, no less than they must, expect to be call'd to Account for all the Talents his Great Master was pleas'd to entrust him with; And that he may be able to give a comfortable Account thereof, it ought to be his Endeavour (as 'tis most certainly his Duty) to employ all his Authority and Power for those good Purposes for which they were given to him by God, that is, to protect his Subjects from Violence and Injury, to maintain Religion and Justice, and to preserve Peace among Men.

For altho' he be not (the Highest Power of all most certainly is not) accountable to any upon Earth; because there is none upon Earth Superior to him; (and none can be accountable for what they do to any but to such as have Power over them, to question, to control, to punish them) yet, with Regard to God, he is upon the same Level with the meanest of his Subjects; He is under the same Obligation in Duty, (He is under a stronger Obligation in Gratitude) to behave himself well in *his* Station, that they are under to do the same in *theirs*; and therefore, if he be failing in what is requir'd of him, must look for no more Mercy from God, the righteous Judge of all, than will be afforded to others of inferior Rank that are alike guilty.

By this Argument the *Apostle* exhorts Masters to discharge faithfully the Duties that are laid upon them, with Relation to their Servants; Eph. 6. *O Ye Masters, do the same things unto your Servants—knowing that your Master also is in Heaven, neither is there Respect of Persons with him.* And his Argument is of the same Force to engage all other Superiors to the like Care; for as the Master has a Master in Heaven, so has the Judge a Judge, the Ruler a Ruler, the King himself a King. And, as we are told in Job 34. 19. *God accepteth not the Persons of Princes, nor regardeth the rich more than the Poor; for they are all the Work of his Hands.* Therefore take Heed what ye do, said *Jehosaphat*, in his Charge to his Judges, *for ye judge not for Man but for the Lord—and there is no iniquity with the Lord our God, nor Respect of Persons.* Chron. 19. 6, 7.

3. If the Magistrate be *the Minister of God* acting by his Commission,

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and

Name,

and exercising a delegated Authority under him, then it must needs be the Duty of Subjects, (a Branch of that Duty which they owe to God himself) to yied Obedience to all those Laws and Constitutions of their earthly Governours, which they, not exceeding the Powers granted them by their Commission, shall in their Wisdom think fit to enact, for the Preservation of Justice, and Peace, and good Order among their Subjects; that is, they are to obey them in whatsoever they command that is not contrary to the divine Law; For I know no other Bounds or Restraints set to the Sovereign Magistrate's Authority, but that. If indeed He commands what God has forbidden, or forbids what God has commanded, he takes upon him to do more than he has Authority for; and in that Case, *we ought to obey God rather than Men: Acts 5. 29.* But in all other Cases, the Laws of the State are to be punctually obey, tho' we see not the Reason of them; nay tho' they should appear to us not so well consulted, nor so prudently contrived as they might have been; And this, not only to escape the Penalty of the Law, but also out of Conscience towards God. *Submit your selves to every Ordinance of Man, for the Lord's sake,* says St. Peter: And ye must needs be subject, not only for Wrath, but also for Conscience sake, *1 Pet. 2. 13.* says our Apostle, at the 5th Verse of this Chapter. And upon this Ground it is, that in *Tit. 3. 1.* he lays it as a Duty upon all Preachers of the Gospel to be very earnest and frequent in pressing this Point upon their Hearers. *Put them in Mind,* says he, *to be subject to Principalities and Powers, and to obey Magistrates.*

Nay tho' the Laws of our Earthly Governours should, in some Instances, be contrary to the Divine Laws (upon which Supposition the Magistrate does certainly exceed the Bounds of his Commission) yet this does not void their Authority; They are *the Ministers of God* for all this; or else there were none that were so, there were none that could be call'd so, when the Apostle wrote this *Epistle*; And there is a Duty lying on Subjects, even in this Case; viz. not to oppose, nor to resist the Power; but quietly and patiently to suffer the Penalty of those Laws which they can't, without Sinning against God, yield an active Obedience to. *Whoever resisteth the Power, resisteth the Ordinance of God,* says our Apostle, *and they that resist shall receive to themselves Damnation.* And, *this* says another Apostle, *is thank-worthy, if a Man for Conscience towards God, endure Grief, suffering wrongfully.* *1 Pet. 2. 19.*

4. Lastly; If the Civil Magistrate be *the Minister of God*, that is, If he acts by a Divine Commission, and all the Authority he has over others be derived from God; then even his Authority, tho' he be the highest of all earthly Powers, is not absolute and unlimited; then he can act with Authority, no farther, nor otherwise, than as he is warranted to do by his Commission; And then also, the same God, the Sovereign Lord of all, who has granted him a Commission for one Purpose, may grant another Commission to another Person, for another Purpose.

I mean plainly this; (which is not only a Supposition of what might

be, but is also true in Fact) God has given the Civil Magistrate Commission and Authority to govern well all the People committed to his Charge, to enact and execute all needful Laws for the Preservation of Justice and Peace among his Subjects ; nay and to him also appertains to provide for the Establishment of the true Religion, and for the regular Exercise thereof ; and God has also arm'd him with the Power of the Sword, to cut off Evil Doers of all Sorts ; that is, not only those who invade the Civil Rights of others, but likewise such as *turn Religion into Rebellion, and Faith into Faction* ; And from Subjection to this Authority of the Civil Magistrate, or Supreme Legislative Power, no Order of Men whatsoever is exempt : He is *Supreme in all Causes, and over all Persons* ; *Let every Soul, says the Apostle, be subject to the Higher Powers.* But it is not within the Commission of the Civil Magistrate, as such, to Baptize, to Preach the Gospel, to serve at the Altar, to Excommunicate, to Absolve, and to Minister in holy things. The Power of Performing these sacred Offices is granted by another Commission, and to another Order of Men ; and *they* have their Authority to do these things as immediately from God, as the Civil Magistrate has his. For it was not to the Civil Magistrate, but to *them* that our Saviour said, *Go ye into all the World, and preach the Gospel to every Creature* ; Mar. 16. 15. 'Twas to *them*, (that is, only to his Apostles, and their Successors in the Ministry of the Gospel by lawful Ordination) that he said, *Go, and Disciple all Nations, baptizing them in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost ; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you ; and lo I am with you alway, even unto the End of the World.* Mar. 28. 19, 10. 'Twas to *them* that he gave in Command to do, after his Decease, and to continue to do until his second Coming, what he himself had just then before done, when *He took Bread and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the Disciples, and said, Take, eat, this is my Body ; and when he took the Cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it ; for this is my Blood of the New Testament, which is shed for many for the Remission of Sins.* Mar. 22. 26, 27, 28. And lastly, 'twas to *them* that he said, *As my Father hath sent me, even so sent I you ; whose soever Sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them, and whose soever Sins ye retain they are retained.* John 20. 21, 23.

Well, but what if the Civil Magistrate will take upon him to do these things in Person ? Or what if he should presume, by his own Authority only, to command or Commission others, not qualified by lawful Ordination, to do them ?

I answer, He may do so, if he will ; for who should hinder him ? But what he does of this Kind, being done without sufficient Authority, must certainly be done without Effect. He may do so, if he will, and if he that does so be the Supreme Magistrate of all, there is no Power upon Earth that I know of to correct or punish him for his Fault ; But *He that is higher than the highest regardeth, and there be higher than they* ; Eccl.

Eccl. 5. 8. There is certainly a Power above that both can and will punish Offenders, tho' they be of the highest Rank, and *mighty Men shall be mightily tormented.*

He may therefore, if he pleases, say to the Priests, as *Corah* and his Company did to *Moses* and *Aaron*, *Ye take too much upon you, seeing all the Congregation are holy, every one of them, and the Lord is among them; wherefore then lift ye up your selves above the Congregation of the Lord?* Num. 16. 3. Or he may, as King *Saul* did, usurp the Priest's Office, when (after a long waiting for *Samuel* to no Purpose) he himself Offer'd a *Burnt-Offering*, 1 Sam. 13. 9. thinking himself, (has he said) under a Sort of Necessity of Doing it, because of his present Distress; and as was done by King *Uzziah* afterwards, when he went into the Temple of the Lord, to burn Incense upon the Altar of Incense, 2 Chron. 26. 16. Or lastly, He may do as King *Jeroboam* did, who made or consecrated by his own Authority only, Priests of the lowest of the People, which were not of the Sons of *Levi*; 1 Kings 12. 31. 13. 33. But I'm sure, if he believes the Truth of those Histories, he'll have but little Encouragement to follow those Examples; Especially, if he considers farther, that all that do the like things, are guilty before God of the like Fault, tho' they main't be always alike punish'd for it in this World.

The Magistrate then has his Authority from God, *He is the Minister of God*; and so have likewise the Dispensers of his Holy Word and Sacraments; They, as to the Spiritual Powers which they are entrusted with, are not the Servants of the State, but *the Minister of Jesus Christ.*

There is therefore no such Absurdity as some would make us believe, in Two distinct Powers, within the same State or Nation, so much independent on each other as these are suppos'd to be. Neither, methinks, should the Notion of it in this Case seem at all strange or uncouth, when 'tis no more than we see every Day in other Instances. For do not the Mayors or other Chief Magistrates, in every City and Corporation within this Kingdom, act, all alike, by Commission from the QUEEN, as Sovereign over all, without deriving any Authority from one another? And within the same City, does not the same Sovereign Power grant divers Commissions to divers Persons, for divers Purposes; to every One of which, all the Inhabitants of that City are bound to be in Subjection? And do not all the Persons so Commission'd move and act, each in his proper Sphere, without more Dependance on each other than the Sovereign is pleas'd to contrive and order? What more Absurdity then is there, in a King's discharging the King's Duty, and a Priest's the Priest's, supposing that neither of them does receive his Authority from the other, but both from God.

Neither can any such Publick Inconvenience as some imagine (or at least would make other People apprehend) ever follow from the Establishment of Two such Independent Powers; upon Supposition that they both receive their proper Authority from a Power that is Superior

to them both, and that they are both subject to his Regulation and Correction; provided also that both these subordinate Powers do keep within the Bounds of their proper Commissions; And if they do not, He, by whose Authority they both act, and who is Superior to them both knows how to lay the Blame where the Fault lies, and is able to maintain his own Supreme Authority over them both. For we see the same thing every Day in other Instances; Every City, every Town has its proper Officers, and those of various sorts, and to various Purposes; but nevertheless, having all of them their Authority from the same Sovereign Power of the State, and every one of them having his proper Business assign'd him, they all move regularly, every one in his own proper Sphere, without giving one another any manner of Disturbance. And therefore so likewise may the Civil Magistrate, and the Minister of the Gospel do, though they have neither of them their Commission from the other, but both from God: Nay, so they must do, if they both act within the Bounds of their respective Commissions; for their Commissions are of different Kinds, and to quite different Purposes; their Businesses do no ways interfere with, or hinder each other, but rather quite otherwise. For the Priest's Power is no Diminution at all to the King's; nay it rather tends to establish it; it being one thing (among others) given him in Charge by God, to put the People in Mind to be subject to Principalities and Powers, and to obey Magistrates; Tit. 3.1. And, on the other Side, the Kingly Power is no Hindrance at all to the Priest in the Discharge his Ministerial Office; It may be, and it oftentimes is, very helpful and assistant to him therein; it is always so, when according to the Promise of God made long ago to his Church, (and which we have the Happiness to see verify'd among us) *Kings are her Nursing Fathers, and Queens her Nursing Mothers.* Isa. 49. 23.

Well, but what if these two Powers should clash? would not that be a great Inconvenience?

Yes most certainly; And so it would be, in any Kingdom, in any State, in any City, if the Subordinate Magistrates and Officers, all acting by the Sovereign's Commission and who had every one their several Offices assign'd them, should clash, or should encroach upon one another. But the Possibility of such an Inconvenience's happening from such a Constitution, is no Reason why Things should not be so Constituted; because however otherwise they were ordered, they would still be liable to some Inconvenience or other, from the irregular Lusts and Passions of Men; much less is it an Argument and Proof, against Fact, that they are not so Constituted. And in Case this should happen, still (as was said before) there is a Remedy; for it being supposed that all the subordinate Officers are Subject to one Supreme Power, he will know where to lay the Blame, and will be able to punish the Offender, whoever he be, that dares to assume or exercise an Authority that was not granted him.

But let us see however, at last, what would be the Consequence, in Case

Case the Civil and Ecclesiastical Officer, under God, the Sovereign Lord of all, should clash or interfere ; or should either of them encroach upon the other ; and let us see what, in that Case, would be to be done, by the one, or by the other of them ; or by the People, supposed to be subject to them both.

Suppose then, *First*, that the Priest, as such, takes upon him to act as a Civil Magistrate. What must be said in this Case, is, that most certainly, he's highly to blame for his so doing ; there being plainly no such Power within his Commission, as a Priest. For if the Kingdom of our Lord *Jesus Christ*, who is *Head over all things to the Church*, was not as himself own'd, *of this World* ; much less can that of his Ministers be so. *Eph. 1. 22. John 18. 26.*

The Remedy therefore of this Inconvenience is very obvious ; and the Civil Magistrate has it in his own Power. For seeing the Man was not, by his being ordain'd a Priest, discharg'd from his Allegiance to his Sovereign, nor made less subject to him than he was before ; the Prince has still full Power over him, to deal with him just as he would, or might, do with any other of his Subjects that was guilty of the like Crime ; He may amerce, he may imprison him, He may (if his Offence be what the Law has made capital) condemn him to Death ; and will be justify'd before God, and in his own Conscience for so Doing ; Nay he would be to blame if he should not do so : *For he beareth not the Sword in vain ; but is—a Revenger to Execute Wrath upon him (whosoever he be) that doth Evil.*

Or put Case, *Secondly*, that the Prince takes upon him, in Virtue of his Sovereign Authority, wholly to prohibit the Priests in the Exercise of their Ministerial Office ; that he forbids them to Preach the Gospel within his Dominion, to Baptize any of his Subjects, to hold any Assemblies for Christian Worship, or the like ; the Consequence of this would be, that the Priests, the Ministers of *Jesus Christ*, being *not of Men, neither by Man, but by Jesus Christ, and God the Father who raised him from the dead*, *Gal. 1. 1.* would be still bound to go on in the Doing of their Duty ; and if thereupon he should question them for their Disobedience to his Order, it would be their Part to say, as the *Apostles* did in the like Case to the Rulers of the *Jews*, *Whether it be right in the Sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God judge ye : Acts 4. 19.* And if after this he should proceed farther to punish them for it, it would then be their Duty to behave themselves as the *Apostles* likewise did in that Case ; that is, to suffer meekly and quietly, the Confiscation of their Goods, the Imprisonment of their Persons, or even Death it self ; and to rejoice that they were counted worthy to suffer—for the Name of *Christ*. (*Ver. 41.*) For if ye suffer for Righteousness sake, says the *Apostle*, happy are ye, and be not afraid of their Terror, neither be troubled ; *1 Pet. 3. 14.* And again, *Let them that suffer according to the Will of God, commit the keeping of their Souls to him in well-doing, as unto a faithful Creator. (4. 19.)*

Or let it be suppos'd farther, *Thirdly*, That the Prince (whether with or without a Prohibition to the lawfully ordain'd Ministers of the Gospel) takes upon himself to exercise their proper Office; or, by Virtue of his Supreme Authority over all, to appoint others, not lawfully ordain'd, to perform it; what would be the Consequence of this? And what would be the Priest's Duty in this Case?

I Answer, the Consequence would be that (as was said before) there would be a perfect Nullity in every thing that the Prince did of this Kind; and the Priest's Duty in this Case would be, to remonstrate to the Prince in the most decent and respectful Manner, the Unlawfulness of such his Attempt; nay, and to withstand him too, with such a sort of Force as the most Dutiful Son might use to restrain and hold back his Father from running into a Fire, or falling into a Pit; as the Priests of the Temple did, when their King *went into the Temple of the Lord, to burn Incense, upon the Alter of Incense, They went in after him, says the Text, and withstood Uzziah the King, and said unto him, it appertaineth not unto thee, to burn Incense unto the Lord, but to the Priests, the Sons of Aaron, that are consecrated to burn Incense; Go out of the Sanctuary, for thou hast trespassed, neither shall it be for thine Honour from the Lord God.* 2 Chron. 26. 16, 17, 18. Thus much, I say, the Priests may say and do; But if by all this the Prince will not be restrained from his Sacrilegious Attempt, I know nothing more that they can lawfully do; but only to refer the Matter to the Judgment of God; who did in that Case of *Uzziah* sufficiently vindicate the Honour of his own Institution; and will always do so, in such manner as to his Infinite Wisdom shall seem best.

Or *Lastly*, (for I think this is the only Case different from the Three former that can be put) let it be suppos'd that these Two Powers do direct or order contrary things. And here the Question will be, How the People (who are suppos'd to be subject to both these Powers) ought in that Case to behave themselves. And the Impossibility of the Peoples observing both their Orders, is mightily urged as an unanswerable Argument that there can't be Two such Independent Powers within the same State or Nation.

But why not? Why not a Prince and a Priest, each acting by Commission from God, as well as a Prince and a Father, to both whom the same Person, as a Subject to one, and as a Son to the other, is oblig'd by the Law of God to yield Obedience? For neither does the Prince receive his Kingly Power over this Person from the Father; nor does the Father receive his Fatherly Power over him from the Prince; but both have their several and respective Powers over him by Divine Institution; And 'tis as possible that the Prince and the Father should order contrary things, as that the Prince and the Priest should do so; Let them therefore who make this such a wonderful Difficulty, say, what the Son is to do in that Case, and then they will readily discern what the Subject is to do in this.

Now 'tis certain that no Law of the State can wholly vacate the Fathers Authority over his Son, so as to make it lawful in the general for a Son to disobey his Father; and yet, the Father him'self being a Subject of the

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State the, Exercise of his Paternal Power may be restrain'd in some particular Instances, by the Laws of the State; so as that it mayn't be lawful either for him to command, or for the Son at his Command to do, some particular things, which he, unless so restrain'd might lawfully have required, and the Son, unless the State had forbidden them, had been bound, at his Father's Command, to have done.

And the Case is the same here; The Priest being, as well as the Civil Magistrate, *the Minister of God*, the Civil Magistrate can't vacate his Commission. No Law of the State can make it lawful for the People to deny or refuse, all Obedience to their Spiritual Guides; to those *who* (as the *Apostle* expresses it) *are over them in the Lord*; 1 Thes. v. 12. for that would be to make void a Law of God commanding the People to *obey them that have the Rule over them, and to submit themselves*: Heb. 13. 17. But then *the Ministers of Christ* being themselves (no less than the People committed to their Charge) oblig'd to be *subject to Principalities and Powers, and to obey Magistrates*, (*Let every Soul be subject to the higher Powers*) it plainly follows, that their Power and Authority over their People, though, as to its Original, (that is, as 'tis deriv'd immediately from God) it may be said to be Co-ordinate with the Magistrate's; yet as to the Exercise of it, in some Partculars, is subordinate thereto, and subject to such Regulations as are lawfully prescrib'd thereby.

And therefore in a *Christian Kingdom* or State (and I have no Occasion now to consider any other Case) the Priest, the *Minister of Jesus Christ*, can't in Opposition to the Supreme Power of the Nation, lay any thing as a Duty on the Consciences of the People, but what he can prove to be so from that Gospel of *Christ*, of which he is ordain'd a Minister: But the Supreme Magistrate's Authority, even in Religious as well as Civil Cases, is more Extensive: the proper Subject-Matter of his power is whatsoever God has given no Order about, one way or t' other; And every Law of his is good and binding to all his Subjects, which is not contrary to a Divine Law.

So that to know whose Order is to be observ'd in Case they should order contrary things, the single Point to be consider'd, is, whether the Matter about which they do give out different or contrary Orders be a thing which the Law of God has given any Direction about, or not: For if it be, there's no Question to be made, but that the Direction given about it by God himself is to be punctually observ'd, whatsoever he be that orders the contrary: And on the other Side, if it be a Matter about which the Law of God has given no direction, there's no more Doubt to be made, but that the Prince's Order is to be observ'd rather than the Priest's; because even the Priest himself is subject to the Prince in all such things; and if he himself can't be justify'd in Disobeying any such Order of the State, much less can any Order of his justify others in the like Disobedience.

And now, having spoken sufficiently (as I suppose) of the Divine Institution of Magistracy; which was the first Point I was to speak to; I should proceed to speak somewhat of the other; *viz.*

II. The

II. The gracious Design of its Institution; *He is the Minister of God to thee for Good.*

And here it would be easy, if I had now Time for it, to shew, both that the Good of the People was the Design of God in his Appointment of Magistrates; and also that this Design of God is very well answer'd; that it is indeed much for the Peoples Good that they are thus put in Subjection to the Power of the magistrates; that they do indeed lead their Lives here more quietly and comfortably under the restraint of Government, than they could possibly do without it, in Case (and that would be the Case then) every Man might do what was right in his own Eyes.

And from the Consideration of both these things it would be easy to shew, by way of Inference, both the Magistrate's and the Subjects Duty, with Regard to each other. For

1. If the Magistrate was ordain'd for the Good of the People, and this was the Design of God in appointing him to his high Office; then this also ought to be his Design in the Administration and Execution of it. It must needs therefore be his Duty, to the utmost of his Power, to defend them from violence, to protect them in their Rights, to preserve them in Peace; neither to oppress them himself, nor to suffer them to be oppress'd by those that are put in Authority under him; And, in a Word, to promote all the Ways he can, both their Spiritual and their Temporal Welfare.

2. If it be for the Good of the People themselves that they are put in Subjection to Magistrates, then it is plainly their Duty, and a very reasonable one too, to be contented and well pleas'd with their Lot of Subjection: And not only so, but likewise with all Willingness and Cheerfulness to yield such Obedience and Submission to their Governours as is due; and to make them the best Returns they are able for the great Benefits which they receive from their Care and Labour, by a most thankful Acknowledgement of the same.

And if I was speaking to this Point, in any other Place but this, especially on this Day of Your Majesty's happy Accession to your Throne, it would be an unpardonable Omission not to take particular notice of our own Happiness in this present Reign; or not to shew the manifold Obligation that we and all your Majesty's Subjects are under, both to accept with all Thankfulness the many and great Benefits we receive from, and have now long enjoy'd under, your Majesty's most gracious and auspicious Government, and also to make the best Returns we can for the same, in such a dutiful Respect to your Majesty's Person, and such a willing Obedience to your Majesty's Commands; as are fit to be paid by the most oblig'd People to the best of Princes.

3. Lastly; The good of the People being the chief thing design'd by God in his Institution of Government; and it being also what, by God's Blessing on his own Institution, is always (even under the worst constituted, and under the worst manag'd Government) in good Measure and Degree procur'd thereby; must it needs be farther incumbent on Subjects, in Consi-

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deration of the Benefits they receive from the Magistrate's Care and Protection; above all things to return their hearty Thanks to Almighty God for this great Blessing; because in truth it is from God, as the Fountain, that all good things do come; by whosoever Hand, or by whatsoever means, they are convey'd to Men; and likewise to put up constantly their humble Petitions to the same Almighty Being, for the Continuance of this Blessing; because, as Solomon says, *The King's heart is in the Hand of the Lord, as the Rivers of Water; He turneth it whithersoever he will.* Prov. 21. 1. And to both these Duties we are exhorted by the Apostle, 1 Tim. 2. 1. *I exhort----- that first of all, Supplications, Prayers, Intercessions and Giving of Thanks be made for--- Kings and for all that are in Authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceably Life in all Godliness and Honesty.*

But I have not Time now to prosecute these Points, nor so much as to mention several other things which might be usefully observ'd and spoken to upon this Occasion.

I shall therefore conclude all with a good Collect of our Church; containing, I think, the most proper Application I could make of this whole Discourse.

Almighty God, whose Kingdom is everlasting and Power infinite; Have Mercy upon the whole Church; and so rule the Heart of thy chosen Servant ANNE our Queen and Governour, that She (knowing whose Minister she is) may above all things seek thy Honour and Glory; and that we and all her Subjects, (duely considering whose Authority she hath) may faithfully serve, honour, and humbly obey her, in thee, and for the according to thy blessed Word and Ordinance; thro' Jesus Christ our Lord, who with thee and the Holy Ghost liveth and reigneth ever One God, World without End. Amen.

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